

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR US IS EG

SUBJECT: IN RESPONSE TO FAHMY

REFS: (A) CAIRO 17788, (B) CAIRO 17748, (C) CAIRO 17746,
(D) CAIRO 17750

1. EXASPERATING THOUGH FAHMY'S CARPING IS GETTING TO BE, WE SHOULD PROVIDE HIM WITH SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSES WHERE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES APPEAR TO BE INVOLVED. HE HAS RECENTLY RAISED THE SUBJECTS OF LIBYA, SUDAN, AND ISRAELI AID LEVELS WITH YOU, AND ON ALL THREE THERE ARE SUBSTANTIVE POINTS THAT CAN BE MADE. ON AID LEVELS, I AGREE IT IS LIKELY THE EGYPTIANS WILL SHORTLY BECOME AWARE OF THE REDUCTION FROM LAST YEAR'S FIGURE, AND WE SHOULD PREPARE FAHMY FOR THIS. PLEASE CONVEY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM ME TO FAHMY:

2. I APPRECIATE FAHMY'S CANDID RESPONSE TO THE POINTS THAT
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YOU CONVEYED FROM ME ON DECEMBER 27 (CAIRO 17788). FRANK-NESS HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT IN THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE HAD OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

3. IN THE SAME SPIRIT, I WANT TO SAY THAT I AM ALWAYS DISAPPOINTED WHEN FAHMY ACCEPTS CONTENTIOUS REPORTS AS HAVING SUBSTANCE AND, RATHER THAN SIMPLY INQUIRING, BURDENS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FURTHER CHARGES AND COMPLAINTS. THE STORIES ABOUT OUR BUILDING A COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK IN

LIBYA AND ABOUT MY ALLEGED STATEMENTS ON ISRAELI AID LEVELS ARE CASES IN POINT. NEVERTHELESS, THE SUBJECTS THEMSELVES ARE IMPORTANT ONES, AND WE SHOULD DO ALL WE CAN TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING ON THEM.

4. LIBYA--

AS YOU HAVE POINTED OUT, U.S. POLICY TOWARD LIBYA HAS NOT CHANGED. OUR RELATIONS CONTINUE TO BE STRAINED. WE CONTINUE TO REFUSE EXPORT LICENSES FOR SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ITEMS SUCH AS THE EIGHT C-130'S BOUGHT AND PAID FOR BY LIBYA AND A REQUEST FOR AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM EVEN THOUGH LIBYA CONTINUES TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN THESE ITEMS. WE DID NOT AGREE TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A LIBYAN AMBASSADOR IN DEFERENCE TO SADAT'S CONCERN AND THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THIS POSITION. DESPITE REPEATED ATTEMPTS BY THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT TO ENGAGE US IN HIGH-LEVEL TALKS IN WASHINGTON AIMED AT AN IMPROVEMENT IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, WE HAVE DECLINED TO DO SO. IN ANY EVENT, WE WOULD NOT TAKE ANY STEPS WITHOUT FIRST CHECKING WITH EGYPT.

WHILE WE ARE GLAD TO GIVE FAHMY OUR ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL SITUATION IN LIBYA, WE BELIEVE THAT EGYPT IS IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION TO MONITOR CURRENT EVENTS IN LIBYA AND TO INTERPRET THEIR MEANING AND IMPORTANCE. WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR EGYPTIAN VIEWS ON THE STRENGTH OF THE CURRENT LIBYAN REGIME AND THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF OPPOSITION
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TO QADHAFI AS WELL AS FAHMY'S COMMENTS SPECIFICALLY ON THE FOLLOWING:

--POLITICALLY, EVENTS OF THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF HAVE MADE VISIBLE THE HOLLOWNESS OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL (RCC) AS AN EXECUTIVE BODY. SINCE AUGUST 1975, MOST RCC MEMBERS HAVE EITHER FLED THE COUNTRY OR ARE UNDER HOUSE ARREST, LEAVING ONLY FIVE--INCLUDING QADHAFI HIMSELF--STILL ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE GOVERNMENT. IT APPEARS THAT QADHAFI CAN COUNT ON UNQUESTIONING LOYALTY FROM ONLY TWO OF THESE, PRIME MINISTER JALLUD AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF YUNIS. THE OTHER TWO, CHIEF OF STAFF KHARUBI AND INTERIOR MINISTER HUMAYDI, HAVE HAD SERIOUS DIFFERENCES WITH QADHAFI OVER THE PAST YEAR. DESPITE THESE AND OTHER

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN QADHAFI AND HIS FOUR COLLEAGUES, IT WOULD NOT APPEAR THAT QADHAFI IS THREATENED BY RIVALS WITHIN THE RCC OR IN THE CABINET. WE HAVE SEEN NOTHING TO INDICATE THAT THOSE RCC MEMBERS WHO ARE IN EXILE OR UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN LIBYA HAVE SUBSTANTIAL FOLLOWING INSIDE LIBYA SUFFICIENT TO POSE THREAT TO QADHAFI.

--WE LACK PRECISE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LOYALTY OF THE

ARMY. DISILLUSIONMENT AMONG HIGHER RANKING OFFICERS HAS GROWN SINCE THE TROUBLES OF AUGUST 1975. QADHAFI NO LONGER TRUSTS HIS OFFICER CORPS AND HAS MOVED YOUNGER KINSMEN AND CLANSMEN INTO STRATEGIC POSITIONS OF CONTROL. HE HAS SOUGHT A COUNTERVAILING FORCE BY APPEALING TO AND ARMING SELECT DESERT TRIBESMEN, HAS DEVELOPED THE POLICE INTO A PARAMILITARY FORCE, AND REPORTEDLY MOVED MAJOR AMMUNITION STORES FROM VARIOUS BASES IN BENGHAZI AND TRIPOLI DISTRICTS TO HIS HOME TOWN OF SIRTE. NEVERTHELESS QADHAFI APPEARS TO HAVE STRONG SUPPORT AMONG ENLISTED MEN AND YOUNGER OFFICERS FROM SMALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES WHOSE FAMILIES HAVE BENEFITTED FROM AMBITIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

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--ANOTHER SOURCE OF OPPOSITION TO THE CURRENT REGIME IS FROM URBAN COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL MIDDLE CLASSES AND FORMER ELITES. QADHAFI'S REORGANIZATIONS OF LIBYA'S UNIVERSITIES AND PURGES OF QUOTE ANTI-REVOLUTIONARIES UNQUOTE HAS GENERATED INCREASED OPPOSITION FROM STUDENTS AND UNIVERSITY STAFF. THESE GROUPS, HOWEVER, SEEM TO BE RELATIVELY POWERLESS AND UNORGANIZED IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO QADHAFI'S RULE.

-- WE HAVE HEARD THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION AGAINST QADHAFI IN OCTOBER. THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS IN GOVERNMENT, COMMERCE, AND THE MILITARY WHO OPPOSE THE CURRENT REGIME BUT THEY DO NOT YET APPEAR TO CONSTITUTE AN ORGANIZED GROUP CAPABLE OF OVERTHROWING THE GOVERNMENT. THERE IS REGIONAL AND LOCAL RIVALRY BUT IT DOES NOT SEEM TO THREATEN NATIONAL CONTROL. (THE LARGE CALL-UP OF YOUNG MEN WHICH BEGAN IN EARNEST IN OCTOBER 1976 HAS NOT IMPROVED LIBYA'S MILITARY CAPABILITY; THERE ARE TOO MANY TO BE EASILY ABSORBED AND THE GREATEST IMPACT HAS BEEN TO SLOW DOWN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY DUE TO MAN-POWER SHORTAGES IN GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS.) WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF ANY SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE OBTAINED BY QADHAFI DURING HIS RECENT MOSCOW TRIP.

-- YOU SHOULD REEMPHASIZE TO FAHMY THAT WE AGREE WITH HIS ASSERTION THAT U.S. AND GOE HAVE SIMILAR INTERESTS IN NOT DOING ANYTHING RELATIVE TO LIBYA THAT WOULD EMBARRASS SADAT OR STRENGTHEN QADHAFI. WITH RESPECT TO REPORTS FROM EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO LIBYA TUHAMI, THESE HAVE PAINTED AN INCORRECT PICTURE OF U.S.-LIBYAN RELATIONS. WE KNOW OF NO AMERICAN SALE OF EQUIPMENT FOR EARLY WARNING STATION OR OTHER COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT FOR LIBYAN MILITARY. AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN, INCLUDING COMMUNICATION SALESMEN, HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY LARG FOR SALES OF ALL KINDS. NORTHROP-PAGE WAS APPROACHED RECENTLY AND CAME TO

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DEPARTMENT TO REACTIVATE A 1974 REQUEST FOR EXPORT LICENSE FOR AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS. OUR EARLIER REFUSAL TO SELL THIS EQUIPMENT TO LIBYA WAS RECONFIRMED.

-- THIS OUGHT TO PUT TO REST FAHMY'S CONCERNS AROUSED BY TUHAM'S REPORT.

5. AID LEVELS--

REPORTS SUCH AS THE ONE FAHMY ALLUDED TO, APPEARING IN THE ISRAELI PRESS, ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. THEY ARE ONLY A SMOKE SCREEN FOR THE ISRAELI ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN A HIGHER LEVEL OF ECONOMIC AID FROM THE U.S.

SINCE FAHMY HAS RAISED THE QUESTION OF AID LEVELS, HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE POINT I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS TO HIM, AND THAT IS THAT WE TREAT THE TOTAL ASSISTANCE LEVELS TO THE COUNTRIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST DISPUTE AS AN INTERRELATED PACKAGE, WITH THE AMOUNT PROVIDED TO THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES REMAINING ROUGHLY THE SAME PROPORTION ONE TO ANOTHER. AS FAHMY KNOWS, THIS WAS THE CASE IN FY 1976, 1977, AND THE TRANSITIONAL QUARTER. IT WILL BE THE CASE IN FY 1978. THIS REFLECTS THE RELATIONSHIP THAT OUR MIDDLE EAST AID HAS TO THE PEACE-MAKING PROCESS AND

IT ALSO TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE REALITIES OF OUR CONGRESSIONAL PROCESS.

FAHMY MAKES REFERENCE TO OUR GIVING ISRAEL EVERYTHING IT WANTS. AS I AM SURE HE UNDERSTANDS, WE HAVE NOT SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED GIVING ISRAEL THE FULL AMOUNT IT HAS REQUESTED EITHER IN 1977 OR IN 1978, WHEN THEY HAVE ASKED FOR U.S. DOLLARS 2.3 BILLION.

THE AID LEVELS THAT WILL EMERGE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES WILL OF COURSE BE THE PRODUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY
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AS WELL AS DOMESTIC BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS WITHIN THE U.S., BUT I CAN ASSURE FAHMY THAT: FIRST, THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT GET ALL THAT THEY WANT; SECOND, EGYPT WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE A VERY MAJOR PROGRAM--AS BEFORE, ONE OF THE LARGEST WE HAVE EVER PROVIDED TO A SINGLE COUNTRY; AND, THIRD, AID TO ISRAEL WILL CONTINUE TO BE LOOKED AT IN RELATION TO THE AID WE ARE PROVIDING TO THE ARAB COUNTRIES, SINCE WE UNDERSTAND THE RELEVANCE OF THESE PROGRAMS TO THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORT. EGYPTIAN AID WILL BE REDUCED IN THE SAME PROPORTION AS ISRAEL, BUT THE REDUCTION WILL NOT IN ANY CASE AMOUNT TO MUCH.

6. SUDAN--

TELL FAHMY THAT I HAVE INSTRUCTED YOU TO SAY AGAIN, AS WE

DID LAST SUMMER, THAT IT IS OFFICIAL U.S. POLICY TO SUPPORT THE LEGAL GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN HEADED BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI. REMIND FAHMY THAT, SINCE NIMEIRI'S HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL PRIVATE TRIP TO THE U.S. LAST JUNE, DURING WHICH HE MET WITH PRESIDENT FORD, WE HAVE TAKEN A SERIES OF STEPS WHICH INDICATE OUR FAITH IN NIMEIRI'S FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES. THESE INCLUDE DECISIONS TO RESUME OUR AID PROGRAM IN SUDAN AND TO MAKE SUDAN ELIGIBLE FOR THE PURCHASE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. IN LIGHT OF THIS IT WOULD BE MAD TO SAY WE ARE WORKING AGAINST NIMEIRI.

YOU SHOULD ALSO KNOCK DOWN THE STORY OF CIA OFFICIALS ATTENDING A RECENT MEETING IN LIVERPOOL WHERE SUDANESE DISSIDENTS AND LIBYANS DISCUSSED PLANS TO OVERTHROW PRESIDENT NIMEIRI. WE CAN ASSURE FAHMY THAT THE REPORT OF ANY AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN SUCH A MEETING IS FALSE. YOU MAY EXPLAIN THAT THERE IS INDEED AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT NAMED COGAN, WHO MOREOVER SERVED IN KHARTOUM SOME YEARS AGO WHEN HE BECAME FRIENDLY WITH THEN-PRIME MINISTER SADIQ AL-MAHDI. COGAN, HOWEVER, HAS NOT BEEN NEAR ENGLAND FOR SOME TIME. SINCE COGAN'S FRIENDSHIP WITH AL-MAHDI WAS PUBLICLY WELL-KNOWN, THE FABRICATORS OF THE LIVERPOOL REPORT MAY WELL HAVE USED COGAN'S NAME TO LEND
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VERISIMILITUDE TO THEIR STORY.
ROBINSON

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